

# IMPROVING STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING NARRATIVE TEXT THROUGH PICTURE SERIES IN THE TWELFTH GRADE STUDENTS OF VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

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## Abstract

Writing is one of productive skills, and teaching writing needs to concern many aspects. One of them is teaching aid. Appropriate teaching aid, like picture series, can help students optimize their learning process in writing. The research objective is to discover the effectiveness of picture series in improving students' writing ability of narrative text. The writer used an experimental method. The population of this research was the students of SMKN 2 Tangerang Selatan. The samples were taken from two classes of the twelfth graders majoring in Accounting. The writer took 31 students for the samples in experiment class and 32 students in control class. The data that the writer got from the research were using the t-test formula. The findings show that using picture series is effective in improving students' writing ability. The result is  $t_{\text{observed}} = 2.73$  and  $t_{\text{table}} = 1.67$ . Because  $t_o > t_t$ , it means there is a significant effectiveness to improve in students' writing ability using picture series. The findings are expected to be useful for the students to help them improve their English writing ability of narrative text. Additionally, it gives information to the teachers to know appropriate teaching aids to teach writing ability for the students.

**Keywords:** *narrative text, picture series, writing ability*

## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English has played important roles in this modern era. It can be seen from its use in many aspects, such as in technology, social, politics, art, education, economics, as well as in creating relationship with other nations. In social, for example, these days many people use English as the bridge of communication to have a contact with people from other nations. It can be realized through social media since they can widely communicate by using English. This kind of communication can be built because English is seen as an international language or

Lingua Franca. Harmer (2001: 01) stated that Lingua Franca is a language which is widely adopted in order to have communication between two speakers who have different native language.

Because of that reason, English is considered as the language that has to be applied in many nations, such as in Singapore, Malaysia, Korea, Japan, and even in Indonesia. In Indonesia, English is a foreign language which is taught as a compulsory subject at schools or universities. Therefore, Indonesian government has a priority in English to be developed in curriculum and taught

structurally in Indonesian Education. Since English has become the compulsory subject in Indonesian education, it has been arranged in Indonesia curriculum. For example, based on the curriculum (Permendikbud, 2016: 47) for senior high school and vocational school (in this case twelfth grade students), it is stated that students are expected to be able to understand, apply, analyse, and evaluate factual, conceptual, procedural and metacognitive knowledge. Moreover, there are four basic language skills in English that have to be learned by students; they are reading, writing, listening and speaking.

For example, someone succeeds in learning English if he can communicate in English in spoken and written way. Written way can be accomplished by writing. Writing is one of productive skills and it has some important roles in this life. By writing, someone can convey and share his ideas, purposes, or opinions to all people without doing it in face to face interaction. For instance, one who is expert in educational world can give his knowledge, ideas, or opinion about it by writing a book. Thus, it will help those who read it to know more about educational world, and it means he has succeeded in conveying and sharing his ideas.

In sharing and conveying some ideas, it needs to concern the kinds of texts used. Almost all of them are learned in senior high school and vocational school, such as, procedure, descriptive, recount, narrative, news item, recount, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, spoof, discussion, *etc.* Narrative has dominant role in the text of writing as almost all writing in daily life uses the pattern of narrative. It can be seen from the statement of Kirsznar and Mandell (1983: 33)

Narrative can be the dominant pattern in many types of writing—formal, such as history, biography, autobiography, and journalism, as well as less formal, such as personal letters and entries in diaries and journals.

In *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary* (1988: 955), “A narrative is a

story or an account of events and experiences.” Narrative is a story from an event that can be a real story or only a fiction story. For example, a story in a novel, personal experience, short story, legend, folk tale, *etc.*

In teaching writing narrative, it can be more effective when English teachers use teaching aids which are suitable for it. Teaching aids can be audio, visual, or audio-visual. One of visual teaching aids is picture.

Ideally, picture can help in teaching writing narrative text because English teachers can use it to make students easier in understanding how to understand the flow of the story and then write it into narrative text. It happens because picture helps students get ideas to write and develop narrative text so that students can be easier to learn and improve their writing ability, especially in narrative text. However, in fact, based on the preliminary research which has been conducted previously, the writer found that there are many English teachers who fail in teaching writing, especially in writing narrative text, because of the use of inappropriate teaching aids. Therefore, this research was conducted to seek whether picture series could be a useful teaching aid and help students to improve their writing ability or not. That is why in this research the writer would like to focus on using narrative text.

Furthermore, there are some related researches, which are already conducted previously. According to the classroom action research conducted by Imastuti *et.al.* (2014:319), picture series helped students to write a story with more detailed information. In other words, they generated longer paragraph by using adequate supporting details. It is in line with Mayasari (2014:104) in her classroom action research, the result showed that picture series not only could improve students writing ability, but also could enhance students’ motivation in learning English, especially in writing.

Moreover, Wening (2016:745) in her research investigated the role of picture series in writing ability. The result showed

that it is beneficial to use picture series as one of instructional media to advance students' writing ability. It is because picture series hold chronological order sequentially, and it makes students easy to generate and organize the information they need to broaden their ideas in written form.

However, those previous researches only showed the results from qualitative perspective, and did not state clearly by using empirical data. Meanwhile, this research would like to seek empirical findings that can be used to prove whether picture series is effective to improve students' writing ability or not.

## METHOD

This research is to seek the empirical data to prove the effectiveness of using picture in improving the students' writing ability of narrative text on the twelfth grade students of SMKN 2 Tangerang Selatan.

This research used an experimental research which was under quantitative approach by using two classes, an experiment class, and a control class. In the experiment class, the writer used picture as teaching aid, while in the control class the writer did not use any teaching aids. Then, the research was conducted at SMKN 2 Tangerang Selatan which is located at Jalan Pondok Aren Raya No. 52, Pondok Aren, South Tangerang, and it was held from February 2018 until March 2018. The population of the research was all the twelfth grade students of SMKN 2 Tangerang Selatan, and the samples were XII Accounting 1 as the experimental class and XII Accounting 2 as the control class. The samples were chosen by using purposive sampling. The writer took 31 students for the samples in experiment class and 32 students in control class.

In this research, there would be two tests; they were pre-test and post test. The test which was used was adapted from the students text book to make it reliable and valid, and it was a writing test since this research would like to measure students' writing ability. Furthermore, the first step

was that the writer gave the pre-test to both classes (experiment class and control class). Then, the treatment was given to the experiment class by using picture series as the teaching aid, while for the control class got the same treatment as usual without using picture series as the teaching aid.

## DISCUSSION

### Result of the Research

This part would like to present the result of the research and the discussion. They would be based on the research problem whether picture series could help students to improve their writing ability or not.

Before conducting the data analysis. The research needed to conduct pre-requisite analysis, Normality test. Based on the result of Normality test that has been conducted, the experiment class got the L-observed is lower than the L – table ( $L_0 < L_t = 0.157 < 0.159$ ), so that it can be assumed that the data is normally distributed.

Then, for the control class, the result of the Normality test was that the L-observed was lower than the L – table ( $L_0 < L_t = 0.112 < 0.157$ ). So, it can be assumed that the control class was distributed normally.

Then, the data would be calculated by using t-test for the data analysis. The result showed that with the table of t-ratio in 0.05 significance level and with the df > 60 to 120 was 1.67. The df in this experiment is  $n_1 + n_2 - 2 = 31 + 32 - 2 = 61$ , so that the writer used the t-ratio (t-table) 1.68. While the data analysis gave t-observed 2.73. It means that t-observed was higher than t-table ( $t_0 > t_t = 2.73 > 1.67$ ). From the result, it could be stated that there is a significant effectiveness in using picture to improve the students' writing ability.

This result was in line with the result of a classroom action research conducted by Ismawati (2014: 99). In her research, it was stated that the implementation of picture in teaching and learning process was believed

to be effective to improve writing ability. Furthermore, picture as teaching aid is useful in teaching learning process since it has several advantages as a teaching aid. It was as stated by Sadiman *et al.*, (1990: 29 – 31) there are five advantages in using picture in teaching learning process. First, picture is concrete and it can be more realistic than other verbal media in showing a main problem. Second, picture can solve the problem in the limitation of time and place. Next, picture can solve the limitation of human sense, so that picture can explain something that cannot be explained by human sense. The last advantage is picture is cheap and easy to get and use.

Therefore, it can be noticed that picture is a useful teaching aid as it can show a problem clearer than other teaching aids. Beside that, it can be used without being influenced by time and place. For instance, when a teacher wants to give the description of what an alligator looks like, he can use the picture of an Alligator without having to bring the real one into class. Furthermore, picture can explain something which cannot be explained by human sense. For example, a teacher, who wants to show a blood cell of an animal, is impossible to bring the blood and see it with eyes, but it is possible if the teacher brings the picture of blood cell and by seeing it students can see it more clearly. In addition, picture is not only easy to use, but also cheap to get. Overall, it can be concluded that picture has some advantages in teaching learning process.

Besides that, according to Finocchiaro and Bonomo (1973: 164 – 167), there are three kinds of pictures: 1) Pictures of individual persons and of individual objects; 2) Pictures of situations in which persons are “doing something”; 3) a series of pictures (six to ten) on one chart. They also said that individual pictures can be used to introduce, to practice, and to test language items. Moreover, they stated that the situational pictures are recommended for representing “real” language. In addition, they clarified that the series of pictures could be helpful in

giving extensive practice in numerous structures with a limited known vocabulary.

From those statements, it can be concluded that teachers can use individual pictures in introducing, practicing, and testing language items. Meanwhile, the situational pictures can be used to elicit “real” language because students are expected to create the real situational language based on what students see in that picture. Moreover, the series in pictures not only can be extremely helpful to introduce and practice many structures, but also can be helpful to introduce vocabularies that students have not known yet.

All in all, according to the discussion between the result and the theory above, it can be stated that picture, in this case picture series, can improve students writing ability, in this case for writing narrative text.

## CONCLUSION

According to the result and the discussion or the research, it can be concluded that picture series has significant effect in students writing ability. It can be caused some factors such as, the characteristics of picture, which can solve the limitation of time and space, and human sense, or can be concrete and realistic. Besides that, the kinds of pictures that can be adapted to the need of teaching and learning process.

Moreover, picture provides ideas, information, and main problem. The success of each student in writing narrative text by using picture is the way they get, explore, and develop their imagination about the ideas, information, and main problem from the picture they see. It means picture can effectively enrich students’ ideas to write a narrative text. Therefore, they can improve and develop it well. When it happens, automatically it can increase the achievement of the students’ writing ability in order to accomplish learning objectives.

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